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INFO RUCNFUR/DARFUR COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L KHARTOUM 000240

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DEPT FOR S/ES, AF/FO, AF/RSA, AND AF/SPG  
DEPT PLS PASS USAID FOR AFR/SUDAN

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/31/2016  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PHUM](#) [MOPS](#) [PREF](#) [PREL](#) [US](#) [SU](#)  
SUBJECT: UPDATE ON SOUTH DARFUR IDP SECURITY SITUATION

REF: KHARTOUM 00220

Classified By: P/E Chief E. Whitaker, Reason: Section 1.4 (b) and (d)

¶1. (C) According to the USAID Darfur Field Office, conflict in Mershing, South Darfur, led to approximately 40,000 ) 60,000 local residents and internally displaced persons (IDPs) fleeing 10 miles southeast to Menawashi. The events, triggered by jinjaweed and police harassment, attacks, and looting of property of local residents and IDPs, occurred January 25-27. This resulted in several of the local populace being injured and perhaps killed; the UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) states four to six civilians died and eight were injured. Mershing is located 60 miles north of the South Darfur state capital of Nyala.

¶2. (C) The USAID Darfur Field Office states that World Food Program (WFP) and UN Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) officials believe the police in Mershing were angry following the January loss of five or six of their fellow officers in an ambush by the Sudan liberation Army (SLA). They regard the host population and IDPs, largely ethnic Fur, as sympathizing with the SLA and failing to warn them of the pending attack. WFP and OCHA believe the police sought revenge, and may have coordinated with jinjaweed to harass those in Mershing. In the absence of civilians, the police apparently fear an SLA attack. The WFP, in coordination with the UNDSS, has designated Mershing a "no-go" area.

¶3. (C) Following a January 29 mission to Menawashi, the Government Humanitarian Affairs Coordinator (HAC) told the international community that the IDPs in Menawashi are prepared to return home, the HAC would pay for transport back to Mershing, and that the police unit in Mershing had been replaced and reinforced. WFP security confirmed that the number of police in Mershing had increased from 70 to roughly 140, but that the original units had not been replaced. OCHHA reported that none of the IDPS it interviewed were willing to return, and rather demanded an international force to provide 24-hour protection. World Vision is providing food aid in Menawashi, Medecins sans Frontieres ) Holland is furnishing a mobile clinic, and the International Organization for Migration is traveling to Menawashi soon to conduct an assessment on the feasibility of returns to Mershing.  
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